

#3

48  
PAGES  
OF STORY  
\$1

# STAR REACH

DRAGONUS

*THE LAST  
BARBARIAN*

by  
FRANK BRUNNER





# THE WIZARD'S VENOM

IT'S BEEN FIFTEEN YEARS SINCE DRAGONUS SLEW THE GREAT WIZARD TALVARUS AND MADE OFF WITH HIS WOMAN! FIFTEEN LONG BLOODY YEARS FOR A MERCENARY!



HIS FACE READS LIKE A BOOK... A VISIBLE TESTAMENT TO THE LIFE OF A FREEBOOTER, AND NOW ANOTHER JOB... ONE LAST MISSION... MAYBE!



WRITTEN AND ILLUSTRATED  
BY FRANK BRUNNER

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LETTERED BY TOM ORZ

SO, YOU FINALLY  
DECIDED TO COME...  
OR DID WE INTER-  
RUPT YOUR BUSY  
SCHEDULE BY  
OFFERING YOU  
A MISSION?

HAD THE  
MAP YOU SENT  
ALONG BEEN  
CLEAR, PERHAPS  
I WOULD HAVE  
BEEN HERE  
SOONER.

NO MATTER, JUST  
FOLLOW ME! A  
VERY INTERESTING  
MOUNT YOU HAVE,  
IN FACT THE  
FIRST UNICORN  
I'VE EVER  
SEEN...

Tsk, tsk...  
SUCH IS THE  
LIFE OF A  
BARBARIAN!

TRUE, MAX  
IS THE LAST  
OF HIS KIND,  
AND ALL I HAVE  
TO SHOW FOR  
A LIFETIME  
OF SPLITTING  
SKULLS!

I'D KILL ANY  
MAN WHO WOULD  
TRY TO STEAL HIM!

WELCOME, DRAGONUS! REST  
YOURSELF, AND JOIN US IN  
OUR FEAST!


NECRODAMUS IS  
MY NAME. I AM...  
SHALL WE SAY...  
"SPOKESMAN" OF  
THIS CONCLAVE!

A FEW DRINKS LATER...

TELL ME, WHAT DO  
YOU KNOW OF THE  
DEAD CITY CALLED  
XANDO?

NOT  
MUCH, JUST  
LEGENDS...





THEN SEE NOW, IN A  
VISION WE PROVIDE,  
XANDO'S TRUE  
HISTORY...

"IT WAS A CITY  
OF NUMEROUS  
PEOPLE, GREAT WEALTH  
AND AN EXTRAVAGANT  
RULER. BEING A PORT CITY,  
XANDO HAD ALSO BECOME  
NOTORIOUS  
FOR ITS MANY  
ALCHEMISTS  
AND MAGICIANS!

"BUT ONE BLACK DAY DOOM  
DESCENDED UPON XANDO. THE  
KING'S INFANT SON HAD BEEN STOLEN,  
AND THE QUEEN'S GRIEF MOVED THE  
KING TO ISSUE A DECREE ...

"BECAUSE IT WAS RUMORED  
THAT MAGICIANS SACRI-  
FICED INFANTS IN THEIR EX-  
PERIMENTS, THE BLAME FELL  
TO THEM. ALL WERE TO BE  
PUT TO DEATH BY FIRE!

"OF COURSE, THE SURVIVING  
NECROMANCERS VOWED  
VENGEANCE. THEY UNITED THEIR  
POWERS INTO A SINGLE  
INCANTATION, AND CURSED THE  
CITY OF XANDO!

"THE CITY WAS  
ULTIMATELY  
ABANDONED AND  
LEFT TO ROT. ITS  
EXISTENCE WAS  
EVENTUALLY  
ERASED FROM  
THE HISTORY OF  
MAN!

"DEATH GRINNED AS PLAGUES AND  
EARTHQUAKES STRUCK THE CITY.  
THIS WAS ONLY THE BEGINNING; THE KING  
WAS NOT IMMUNE. HE LIVED TO SEE THE  
ENTIRE ROYAL FAMILY DEVoured BY AN  
UNEARTHLY CREATURE THAT SLITHERED  
OUT OF A FISSURE!

WHAT WE ARE INTERESTED IN IS A VIAL OF VENOM THAT IS STILL SAID TO EXIST IN THE RUINS. IT IS THE INGREDIENT THAT ENABLED XANDO'S SORCERERS TO UNITE THEIR POWERS...

PERSONALLY, I DON'T GIVE A DAMN WHY YOU WANT THIS VENOM, ONLY IN WHAT MY REWARD WILL BE!

MAGICALLY, A CURTAIN PARTS...

YOU SPEAK BRAVELY FOR AN AGING MERCENARY! IF YOU SHOULD RETURN ALIVE WITH THE VENOM, YOUR PAYMENT SHALL BE GREAT INDEED... BEHOLD!

BEFORE DRAGONUS CAN ANSWER, ANOTHER CURTAIN PARTS...

TRULY, THIS IS A MISSION DRAGONUS COULDN'T WAIT TO HANDLE...

... AND IF YOU ARE STILL IN DOUBT, TURN AND MEET URSULA!

SHE, AND A CHAMBER ARE YOURS FOR AN EVENING OF PLEASURE IF YOU DECIDE TO UNDERTAKE OUR MISSION!

IT ALL SEEMS LIKE SOME FANTASTIC DREAM, AND NOW 'TIS MORNING-ALREADY...

I HAVE TO GET STARTED, EVEN THOUGH I'D RATHER STAY HERE WITH YOU, I--

THEN WHY LEAVE ME... YOU MIGHT LIKE COMPANY ON SUCH A LONG JOURNEY!

**THE** DRAGONUS IS VERY ANXIOUS TO  
BECOME A RICH MAN, SO  
THEY RIDE ALMOST DAY AND  
NIGHT...



UNTIL A FORTNIGHT  
LATER, THEY  
REACH THEIR GOAL...



...XANDO...  
CITY OF  
THE DEAD!



**THE** DRAGONUS AND  
URSULA DISMOUNT,  
AND CAUTIOUSLY  
APPROACH THE  
RUINS, WHEN...



HEE HEE WELCOME,  
FOOLS, AND FOOLS  
YOU ARE INDEED,  
FOR WHAT YOU  
QUEST IS NO SECRET...

THERE'S BUT ONE  
ITEM OF VALUE IN THIS CITY...  
THE DRAGON'S VENOM!



WHO THE HELL ARE  
YOU, MAD ONE?

I AM  
THE KING'S  
LOST SON,  
OF COURSE  
HEE HEE... I  
REIGN OVER  
THIS CITY...



I HAVE  
TOLD MANY  
WHO SEARCHED,  
WHERE TO FIND  
DEATH, AND I WILL  
SHOW YOU AS  
WELL... COME...

**THE** PAIR ARE  
LEAD THRU A  
MAZE OF CRUMBLING  
BUILDINGS, UNTIL ...



HERE, HEH  
HEH, IS WHAT  
YOU WANT...  
IS IT NOT?









DDRAGONUS HEARS THE CRACK OF A SPINE AND SPLINTERING OF A RIB CAGE... THE OLD MAN CEASES HIS SCREAMS AS THE THING CRUSHES THE LIFE OUT OF HIM!



A GLOWING FILLS THE ROOM AS IT RISES FROM THE PIT, SLOWLY TURNING A HIDEOUS CRIMSON, GORGING ON THE BLOOD SQUEEZED OUT OF ITS VICTIM!



AND NOW IT WANTS A SECOND VICTIM, IF THOSE TENTACLES COMING MY WAY MEAN ANYTHING...



IT WOULD BE EASY ENOUGH TO ESCAPE, BUT IT SO HAPPENS THAT THING STANDS BETWEEN ME AND THE VENOM. AND I'M NOT ABOUT TO LEAVE EMPTY-HANDED, SO...

DDRAGONUS MAKES A SUDDEN DASH TO THE PIT'S EDGE!

...DIE, DEMON THING!!





DRAGONUS STABS AGAIN AND AGAIN INTO THE VERY HEART OF THE DAMNED THING. FOR THE FIRST TIME, PAIN IS FELT IN ITS ENDLESS EXISTENCE... IT SCREAMS!

THE UNEARTHLY SHRIEK RIPS THROUGH DRAGONUS AND SENDS HIM REELING!

THE BARBARIAN RECOVERS HIS SENSES IN TIME TO SEE THE THING SINK BACK INTO THE ABYSS... HIS DRAGON BLADE STILL BURIED IN IT!

WASTING NO TIME, DRAGONUS GRABS THE VENOM AND MAKES HIS WAY BACK OUT INTO THE LIGHT OF DAY.



URSULA!  
I'VE GOT  
THE VENOM!



COME ON,  
LET'S GET  
OUT OF  
HERE...  
WHERE IS  
MAX?

I... I  
DON'T  
KNOW...



WHAT DO YOU MEAN,  
YOU DON'T KNOW?  
LOOK AT ME, WENCH!

PLEASE...  
DON'T... I...





LAUGHTER FILLS THE COURTYARD AS

YES YOU IGNORANT FOOL,  
THERE NEVER WAS A  
KING OR DRAGON'S  
VENOM, BUT YOUR  
PRECIOUS UNICORN,  
OR AT LEAST  
ITS HORN WAS  
REAL ENOUGH

AND YOUR  
"LITTLE TRIP"  
GAVE US THE  
NEEDED TIME TO  
MAKE PROPER  
USE OF IT!

I KILL YOU  
BASTARDS  
WITH MY  
BARE HANDS!

I'M AFRAID YOU STILL  
DO NOT UNDERSTAND.  
THAT ONE THE  
UNICORN'S HORN IS  
THE ELEMENT WHICH  
UNITED OUR POWERS...

WE HOLD  
ALL THE CARDS  
AND YOU HAVE  
JUST LOST  
THE GAME

JUST AS THE  
WIZARD'S WORDS  
END

THEY'RE DESTUR  
ING AT ME I  
FEEL THEIR POW  
ERS MUST GET  
AWAY MY HEART  
ITS POUNDING  
WILDLY...

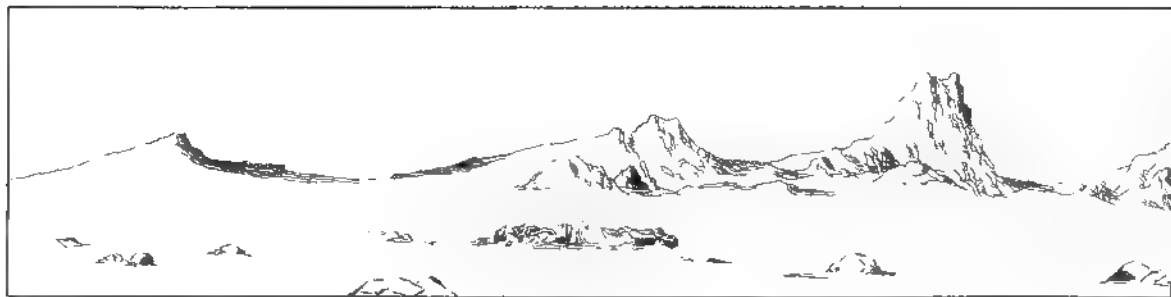


• TSK TSK E  
HE HAS  
SU H A  
BRAVE  
HEART!

WE'LL PUT IT AWAY  
FOR SAFE KEEPING. WE  
WON'T NEED IT 'UNCE WE  
MAGICALLY REANIMATE  
HIM AS A GENERAL IN  
OUR ARMY OF THE  
UNDEAD!

AFTER ALL HE  
WAS THE GREAT  
DRAGONUS! HA  
HA HA HA HA

THE END



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*i hunger... and i wait.*

*...it has been many days*

*since my lips have touched flesh...*

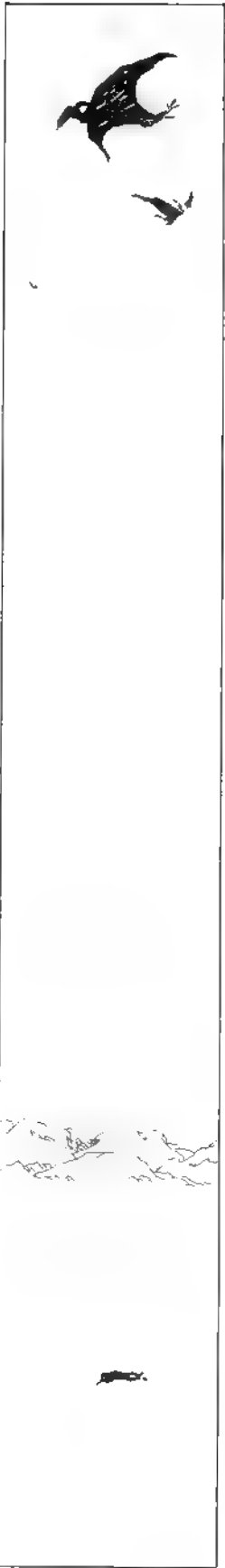
*...many days...*

*these devils too*

*have empty bellies....*



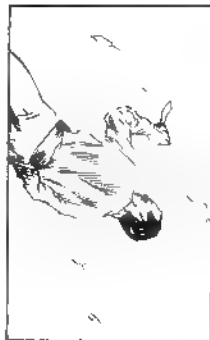


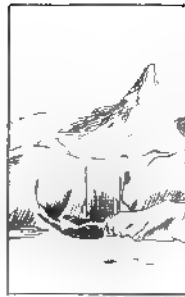
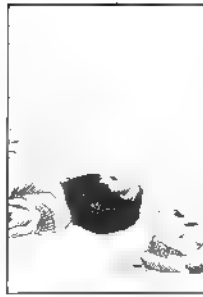


*...they think to make me serve to fill them....*

*...but i can also scheme  
and we shall see, in the end,  
who is the hunted, and who  
the hunter....*

*for i too have claws that tear  
and divide.... and i too have hunger  
and i have patience...*





*the sun laves me with brilliant tongues of hate,  
absorbing my life slowly, like steel within fire...  
but this hunger withers more than the heat...  
therefore...*

*i wait, still, for this gathering of hatred, wait  
for them to draw closer to the bait...*



*...i must remain still, unmoving,  
unnoticed, as if dead to all...  
so that i may wear  
the warmth of their deaths  
a fullbelly  
to render this night more*

*pleasant...*

*and fiends of feather  
demons in leather  
dance and deceive above  
like points of hell's dying fires...*





*...and slow, it begins...  
...this waltz of death, with pitched  
sweep of hellwings, murderous dives*



*...eyes  
empty for  
flesh, and maws craving  
blood,  
tongues crawling...*

*and all in a moment,  
as if linked  
in hideous thought,  
wings fold back,  
beaks point....*

*....the air bursts down  
in stinking rush—  
in a hail of rustles,  
they alight.*

*night is near  
and soon i may move....*





*.ahh... they begin to feed  
and i feel i have won...*



*...their beaks rip and swallow  
steaming strips of his flesh...  
...the moment is indeed*

*tempting...  
i shall soon enjoy,  
even as they enjoy....*

*. but now,  
there are too many....*

*so...*

*i hunger*

*and i wait.*

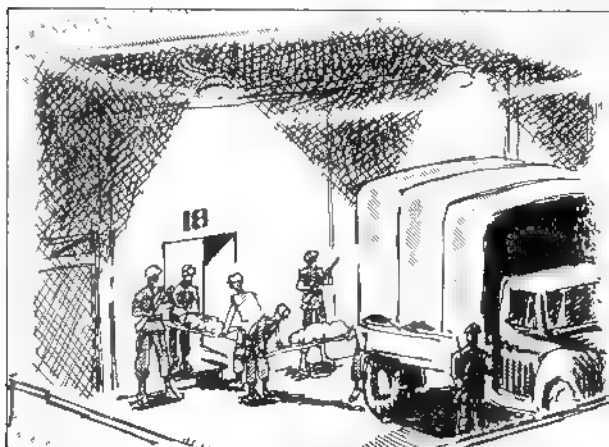
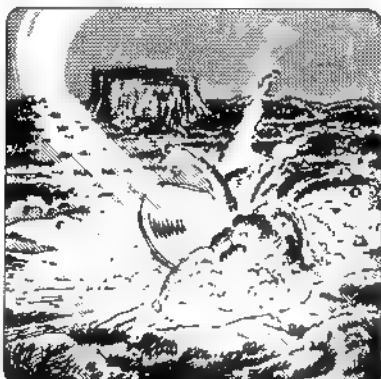


# Earthprobe

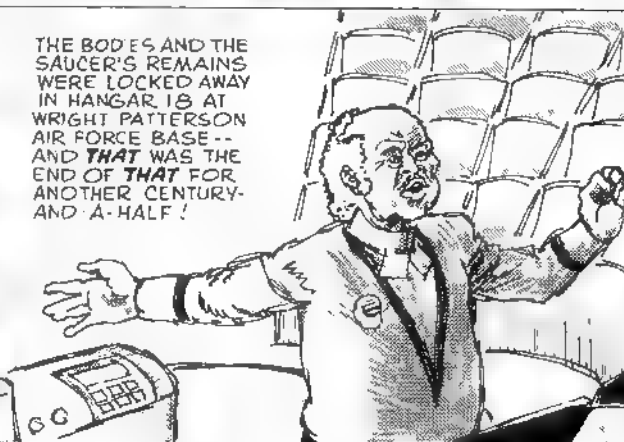
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OCTOBER 23, 1948 AIR FORCE RADAR WAS TRIANGULATING A METEOR SHOWER ABOVE THE AMERICAN SOUTHWEST WHEN IT PICKED UP, SOMETHING ELSE, SOMETHING HURTLING ALONG AT AN ASTONISHING 18 000 KNOTS.

NO SOONER HAD WORD OF THE **IMPLAUSIBLE** VEHICLE BEGUN PASSING UPWARD THROUGH THE RANKS THAN IT SUDDENLY FALTERED ON ITS PATH AND VIOLENTLY TUMBLED EARTHWARD.



THE BODIES AND THE SAUCER'S REMAINS WERE LOCKED AWAY IN HANGAR 18 AT WRIGHT PATTERSON AIR FORCE BASE -- AND **THAT** WAS THE END OF **THAT** FOR ANOTHER CENTURY AND A HALF!



OF COURSE THE BODIES WERE TESTED BUT ALL THAT COULD BE PROVED WAS THAT THEY WERE **ALIENS**... UNTIL, LAST MONTH THERE WAS SOMETHING MUCH **BETTER** THAN BODIES



BETTER THAN BODIES? LOGAN, WE MUST ASK THE CHIEF TO OUR VERY NEXT ORGY!

EARTHPROBE'S SHIPS COULD NEVER CATCH THE SAJICERS WE SIGHTED, BUT RECENTLY WE **PERSUADED** THE U.N. TO LOAN US AN R-CLASS CRUISER.



YOU MEAN ONE OF THOSE WITH THE **SHOWERS**?

ALL THE BRASH SELF-CONFIDENCE HAD ENDED THEN, SIX WEEKS AGO, WHEN THEY SET OUT FOR THE CHURNING DUST OF KRUSCHENKO'S CLOUD, MORE THAN A PARSEC FROM EARTH NOW ON THE TRAIL TO HUMANKIND'S FIRST CONTACT WITH EXTRATERRESTRIAL INTELLIGENCE NIKKI AND LOGAN FOUND THEMSELVES ADRIFT

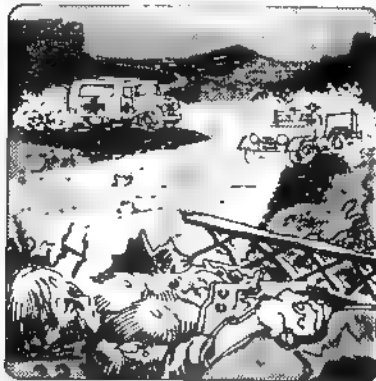
## ON THE SHO



EMERGENCY SERVICES FROM NEARBY AZTEC NEW MEXICO, ARRIVED ON THE SCENE WITH MINUTES READY FOR ANY CONTINGENCY IN THE BOOK BUT NOT FOR WHAT THEY WERE SOON TO FIND

AMONG THE DEBRIS WERE TWELVE **BODIES**. THEY WERE FAIR HAired, BLUE EYED AND MUSCULAR -- GROTESQUELY IMPOSSIBLY MUSCULAR AND NONE WAS MORE THAN FOUR FEET TALL

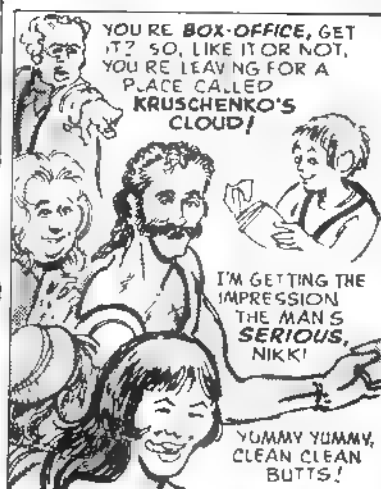
WHATEVER **ELSE** THEY WERE, THE BODIES WERE A **PROBLEM**, AND EVEN AZTEC'S CLOSE-MOUTHED CHIEF OF POLICE UTTERED AN AUDIBLE SIGH OF RELIEF WHEN THE U.S. AIR FORCE TOOK CHARGE



THAT **CRUISER'S** THE FASTEST PIECE OF MACHINERY 22<sup>ND</sup> CENTURY TECHNOLOGY CAN BUILD, AND WITH IT WE TRACKED A SAUCER TO WHERE WE THINK THE ALIENS LIVE. AND YOU'RE GOING TO FIND THEM AGAIN BEFORE WE TELL THE U.N.!



I'D RATHER BURN YOUR BUTTS THAN GIVE YOU THAT CRUISER, BUT WE'LL NEED A LOG OF THE TRIP THAT WILL SELL EVEN IF YOU FAIL



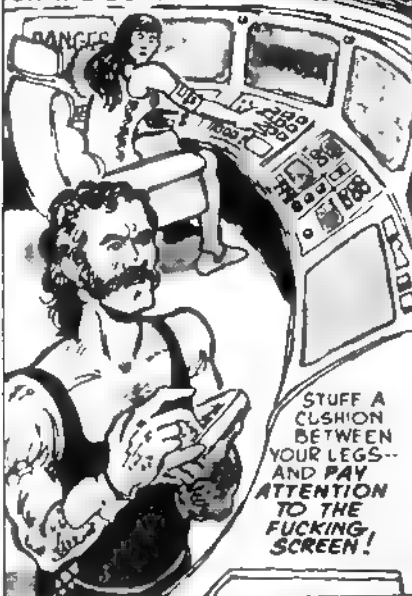
# ALS OF SPACE

SCRIPT and LAYOUT  
MAL WARWICK  
ART  
LEE MARRS  
LETTERING  
TOM ORZECOWSKI

SPACE THEY WERE LEARNING  
WAS ANYTHING BUT THE BOTTOMLESS INKY  
ABYSS THAT ROMANTIC WRITERS EXTOLLED.  
IT WAS, RATHER, AN OCEAN OF  
UNKNOWN, WITH ITS DEEPS  
AND ITS SHADOWS....

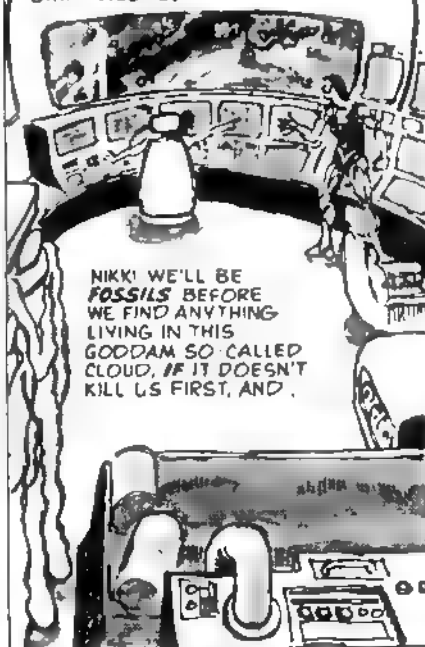
HERE,  
WHERE PERIL  
WAS COMMONPLACE,  
DANGER TOOK ON A  
MONOTONY OF  
ITS OWN.

YOU KNOW LOGAN,  
IT'S BEEN ALMOST  
SIX WEEKS. I MEAN,  
SHIT, AREN'T WE MORE  
THAN WORKING PARTS  
ON THIS BOAT?



STUFF A  
CUSHION  
BETWEEN  
YOUR LEGS--  
AND PAY  
ATTENTION  
TO THE  
FUCKING  
SCREEN!

JUST ONE MORE GRATUITOUS  
COMMENT AND YOU PILOT THIS  
SHIP-- ALONE!

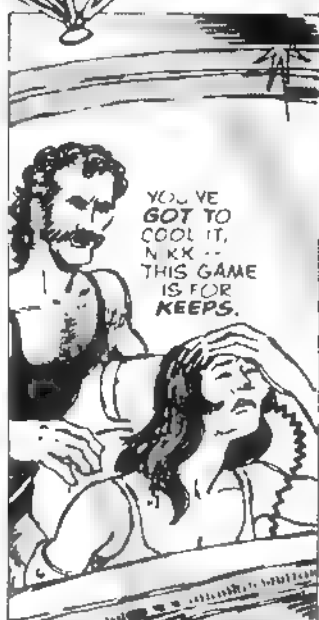
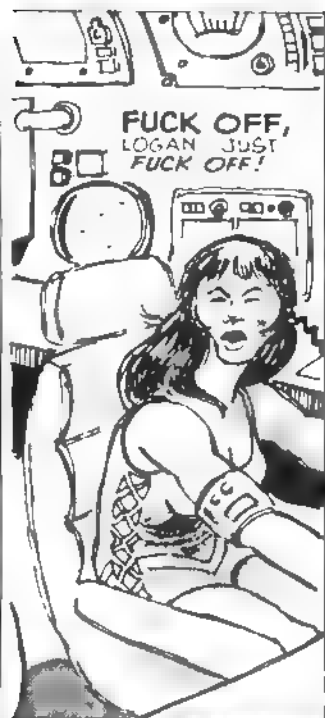
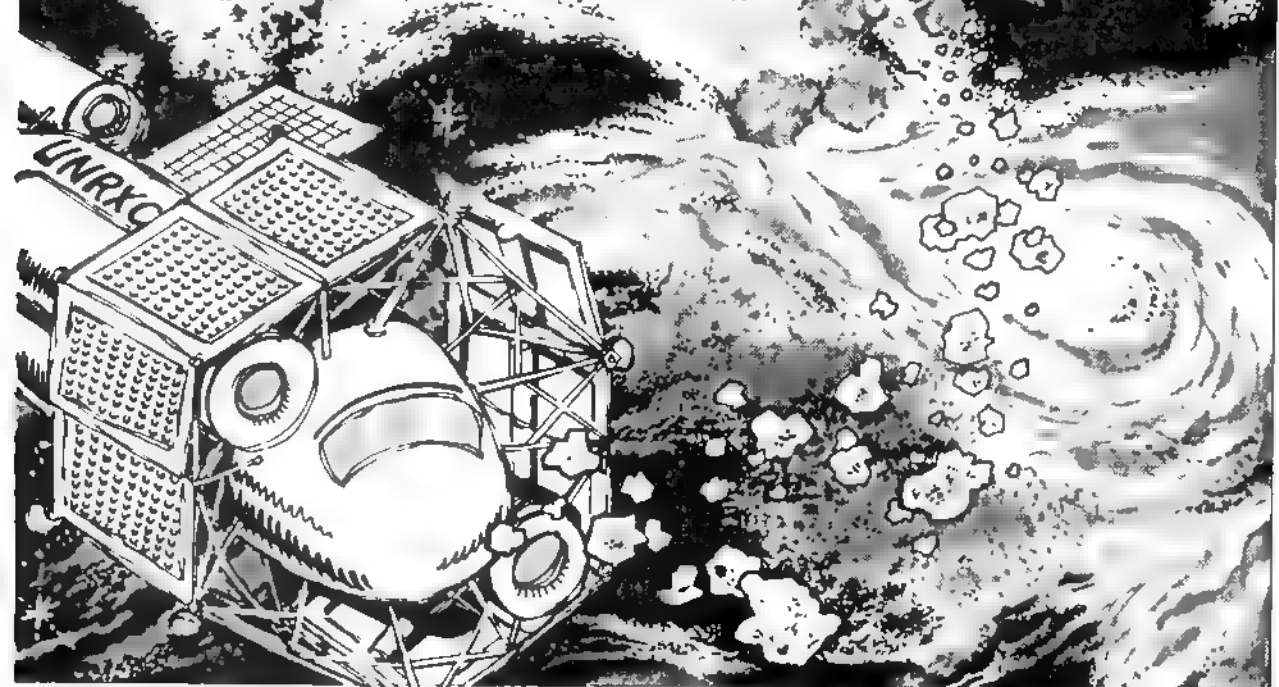


NIKKI WE'LL BE  
FOSSILS BEFORE  
WE FIND ANYTHING  
LIVING IN THIS  
GODDAM SO CALLED  
CLOUD, IF IT DOESN'T  
KILL US FIRST, AND .

.. AND YOU'RE POISONING  
MY DECLINING  
YEARS WITH ALL THAT  
CRAP ABOUT SEX!  
WHAT'S WRONG WITH  
OLD FASHIONED  
SUBLIMATION? OR  
YOU COULD TRY THE  
SHOWER!



...AND HERE ON THE  
SHOALS OF KRUSCHENKO'S  
CLOUD, AWASH WITH DEBRIS FROM  
CREATION ITSELF, IT WAS A SEA TO  
RIVAL THE SEAS OF TROUBLES OLD  
MARINERS WHISPERED  
ABOUT.

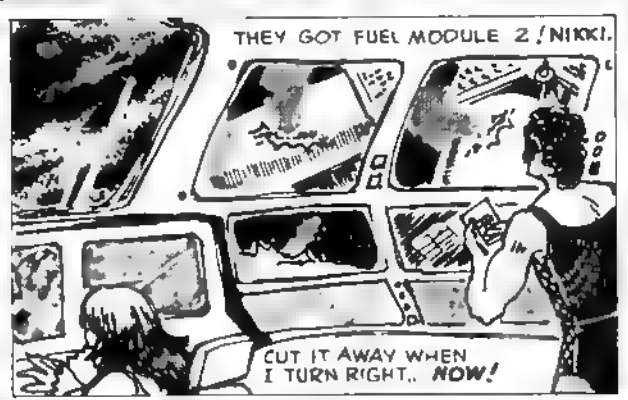


IT WAS AT TIMES LIKE THIS  
THAT NIKKI CONSIDERED  
THE PROS AND CONS OF  
CATATONIA, BUT LOGAN WAS  
WELL LOGAN WAS LOGAN.

WARNING UNRX09! HEED  
THE WORDS OF A FRIEND.  
YOUR SHIP IS IN DANGER!  
BRAKE AND PARK! BRAKE  
AND PARK! YOU APPROACH  
DANGER!







THEY GOT FUEL MODULE 2! NIKKI!

CUT IT AWAY WHEN I TURN RIGHT.. NOW!

IN FACT,  
NIKKI. I  
DONT THINK  
I LIKE HER  
AT ALL!  
BUT WHAT  
THE FUCK  
CAN WE DO  
W/ THOLT  
GUNS?

WE'RE  
TURNING,  
NIKKI...  
ANYMORE  
BRIGHT  
IDEAS?

WELL  
WE CAN'T  
RETURN  
FIRE, SO  
I'M JUST  
GOING TO...  
STOP.

WHAT  
THE  
HELL  
ARE  
YOU  
DOING,  
NIKKI?

BRAKING... NOW,  
LOGAN! JETTISON  
THE REAR  
COMMUNICATIONS  
NET! NOW!

AND NOW,  
LOGAN  
FOR MODULE  
3 AND THE  
FORWARD  
NET

SO GOES  
OUR CONTACT  
WITH EARTH  
AND LET'S  
PREPARE  
CAMERAS.  
HE'S  
GOING  
TO  
LOVE  
US

BUT LOGAN - HE'S GOT TO  
MAKE A L WANCES FOR  
A GENIUS! OR  
HABEN? I  
TOLD YOU  
I'M A  
GENIUS?

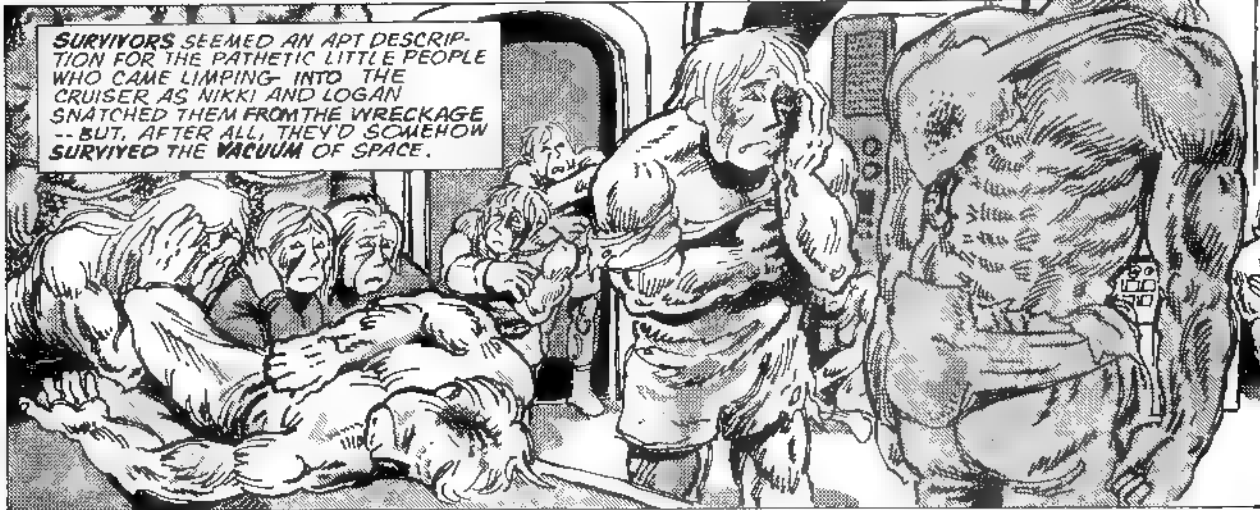
REPEATEDLY  
REPEATEDLY

AND  
NOW YOU  
CAN SEE  
THE  
GEN  
WHAT  
ARE THE  
SURVIVORS?

PREFER FIRST  
THINGS FIRST BUT  
WE WANT AS  
WE CAN  
THEM IN



**SURVIVORS SEEMED AN APT DESCRIPTION FOR THE PATHETIC LITTLE PEOPLE WHO CAME LIMPING INTO THE CRUISER AS NIKKI AND LOGAN SNATCHED THEM FROM THE WRECKAGE -- BUT, AFTER ALL, THEY'D SOMEHOW SURVIVED THE VACUUM OF SPACE.**



THREE OF THE ALIENS SPOKE WESTERN, POORLY -- THE STILTED WESTERN LANGUAGE OF THE BROADCASTS THEY'D BEEN MONITORING ON EARTH FOR CENTURIES PAST, AND OF THESE THREE THE ONE CALLED MEERA WAS SENIOR.

IT WAS MEERA THAT LOGAN AND NIKKI GRILLED, PROBING HER RACE'S BIOLOGY, ITS SCIENCE AND ITS MORALS, ITS PAST AND ITS FUTURE BUT SHE MIGHT AS WELL HAVE SPOKEN URDU. SHE SEEMED NOT TO GRASP THE CONCEPT THAT QUESTIONS CALLED FOR ANSWERS.

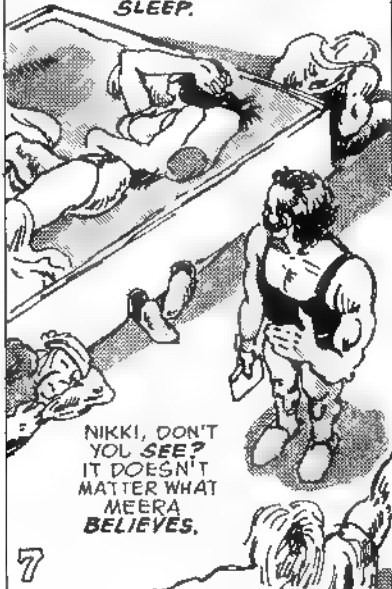
IT WAS MEERA THEY COAXED AND BULLIED IN SHIFTS, HOPING TO MAKE

SOME SENSE OF HER GABBLE WHILE THE OTHERS SAT TREMBLING, TRANSFIXED WITH FEAR.

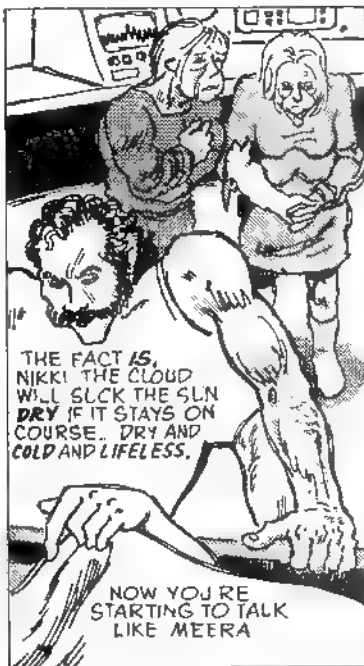
IT WAS MEERA WHO, A FULL SOLAR DAY LATER, TOLD THEM ABOUT KRUSCHENKO'S CLOUD. "THE CLOUD POINTS THE WAY," SHE WHISPERED WITH REVERENCE. "THE CLOUD IS MOVEMENT... POETRY... LIFE!"

THE CLOUD, SHE TOLD THEM IN THE FOLLOWING HOURS, WAS MORE THAN HOME TO HER PEOPLE, MORE THAN THEIR LIGHT-SOURCE, THEIR SUSTENANCE, THEIR DEITY. THE "CLOUD THAT MOVES FOR MOVEMENT'S SAKE" PURSUED ITS ERRATIC COURSE THROUGH THE GALAXY, FOLLOWING NO

MEERA'S AFRAID OF US BECAUSE WE'VE BEEN STARVING HER, YOU DODO! NOW LET ME GET SOME SLEEP.



NIKKI, DON'T YOU SEE? IT DOESN'T MATTER WHAT MEERA BELIEVES.



THE FACT IS, NIKKI, THE CLOUD WILL SLICK THE SUN DRY IF IT STAYS ON COURSE. DRY AND COLD AND LIFELESS.

NOW YOU'RE STARTING TO TALK LIKE MEERA

LOOK, DAMMIT - IF WE CAN'T TURN THE CLOUD, THEN EARTH, SUN, EVERYTHING IS LOST WITHIN A YEAR, AND WE DON'T HAVE A YEAR!



OKAY, BUT DON'T BE SO SERIOUS. YOU'RE AS BAD AS LAFITTE





THEY WERE ALIENS, AND WITH OR WITHOUT EARTHPROBE'S CAMERAS ON HAND, THIS WAS HUMANKIND'S FIRST RECORDED CONFRONTATION WITH A RACE THAT WAS TRULY UNHUMAN.

PHYSICAL LAWS, COHERING WITHOUT PHYSICAL REASON TOLERATING THE LITTLE PEOPLE WHO LIVED OUT SHORT LIVES ON THE WHIRLING CHUNKS OF ROCK AT ITS CORE. TOLERATING THEM BECAUSE THEY SCOUTED THE WAY AHEAD FOR THREATS TO ITS LONELY, UNKNOWN PURPOSE.

MEERA AND HER PEOPLE HAD ATTACKED NIKKI AND LOGAN JUST AS THEY HAD SURVEYED EARTH... OUT OF FEAR THAT HUMANKIND WOULD DEPRIVE THE CLOUD OF THE LIMITLESS ENERGY IT CRAVED THEY WERE SLAVES TO THE CLOUD-- PARASITES; TICKS ON AN INTERSTELLAR WATER BUFFALO WHICH CRASHED ALONG FROM STAR TO STAR, GREEDILY DRINKING ITS FILL

OF LIGHT UNTIL THE STELLAR FIRES WERE STILLED

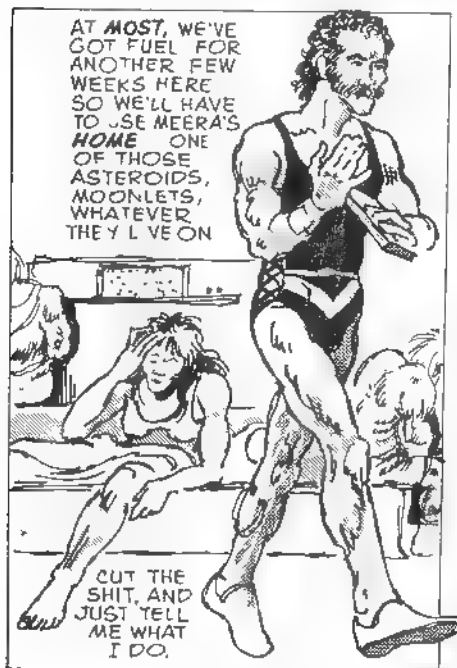
NIKKI SHRUGGED OFF THE ALIENS' THEOLOGY AND CLEARED HER BUNK FOR A LONG NEEDED NAP. ONLY TO FACE LOGAN'S WONDER-STROCK EYES WHEN HE SPUN HER ABOUT TO RELATE WHAT HIS CALCULATIONS HAD SHOWN.

WHETHER SENTIENT OR NOT, WHETHER GOD OR PARADOXICAL PHYSICAL PHENOMENON, KRUSCHENKO'S CLOUD WAS MUCH AS MEERA DESCRIBED IT, AND NOW IT WAS ACCELERATING ON ITS COURSE... DIRECTLY TOWARD EARTH'S SUN!

THE CLOUD POINTS THE WAY!



BUT THERE **MUST** BE A WAY TO CHANGE ITS COURSE! WHY ELSE DO YOU FEAR US?

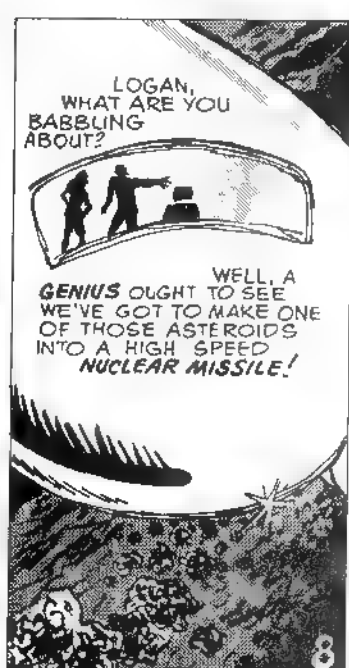


AT MOST, WE'VE GOT FUEL FOR ANOTHER FEW WEEKS HERE SO WE'LL HAVE TO USE MEERA'S HOME ONE OF THOSE ASTEROIDS, MOONLETS, WHATEVER, THEY'LL VEON

CUT THE SHIT, AND JUST TELL ME WHAT I DO.

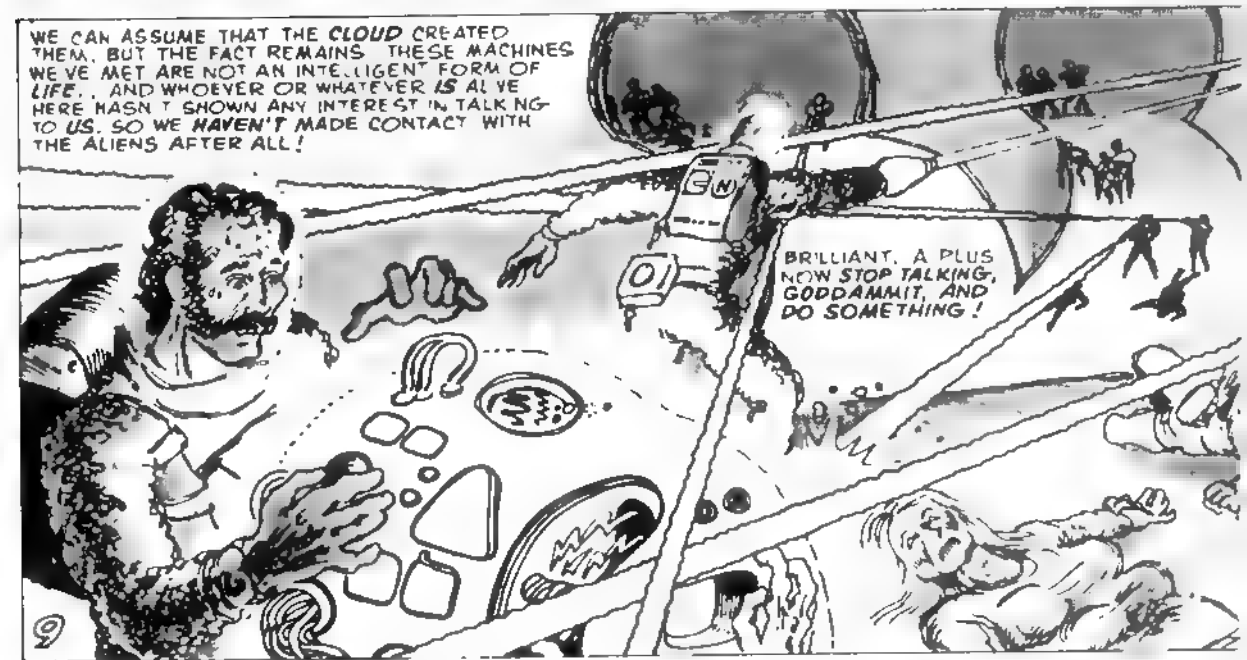
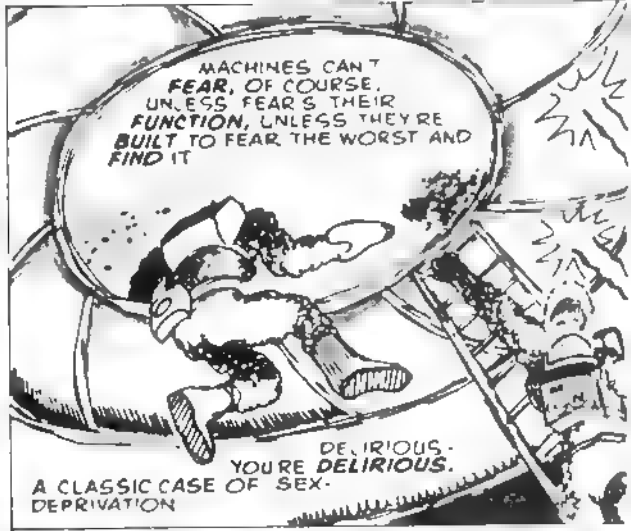
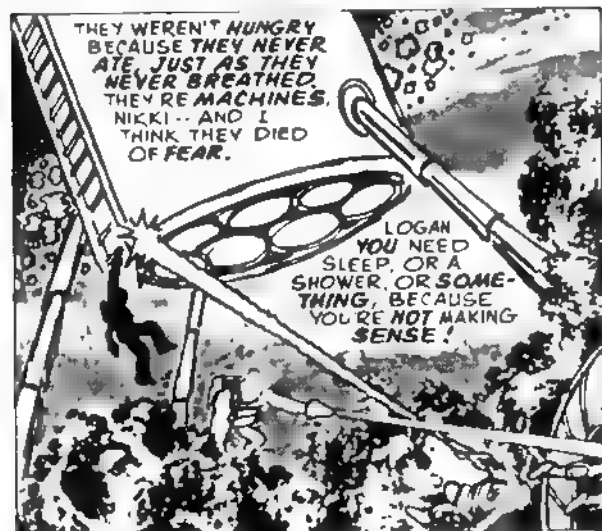


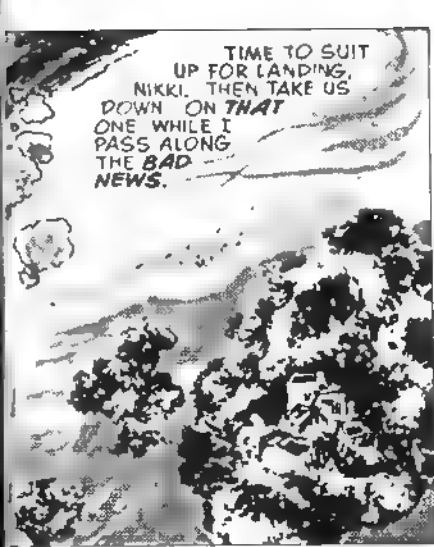
TAKE CONTROL, NIKKI BUT THINK. SWARMS OF METEORITES. SWARMS OF BLACK HOLES. CHURNING DUST AND ION WINDS. THIS FUCKING CLOUD WON'T LET **ANYTHING** LIVE. STANDING STILL SO THEIR HOME-WORLDS HAVE GOT TO BE MOBILE! GENUINELY MOBILE!



LOGAN, WHAT ARE YOU BABBING ABOUT?

WELL, A GENIUS OUGHT TO SEE WE'VE GOT TO MAKE ONE OF THOSE ASTEROIDS INTO A HIGH SPEED NUCLEAR MISSILE!



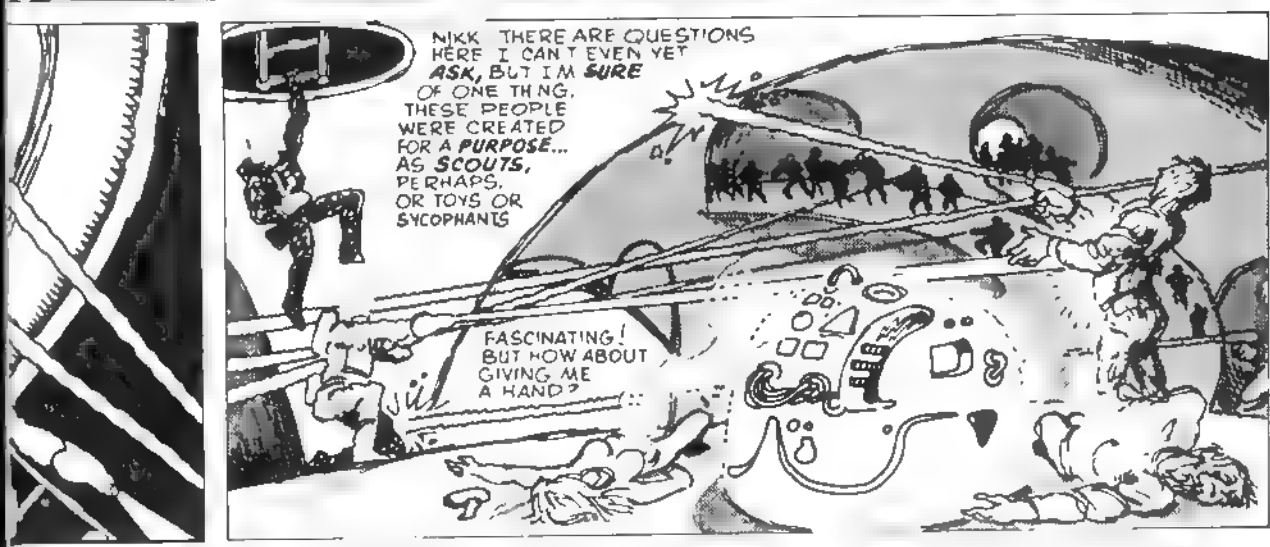


TIME TO SUIT  
UP FOR LANDING,  
NIKKI. THEN TAKE US  
DOWN ON **THAT**  
ONE WHILE I  
PASS ALONG  
THE **BAD**  
NEWS.




WHICH IS  
TO WIT: **WE**  
**HAVEN'T MADE**  
**CONTACT WITH**  
**ALIENS-- BE-**  
**CAUSE MOST OF**  
**OUR FRIENDS**  
**BACK HERE**  
**ARE DEAD!**

LOGAN, I TOLD  
YOU THEY WERE  
HUNGRY.



NIKK THERE ARE QUESTIONS  
HERE I CAN'T EVEN YET  
**ASK, BUT I'M SURE**  
OF ONE THING.  
THESE PEOPLE  
WERE CREATED  
FOR A **PURPOSE...**  
AS **SCOUTS,**  
PERHAPS.  
OR TOYS OR  
SYCOPHANTS

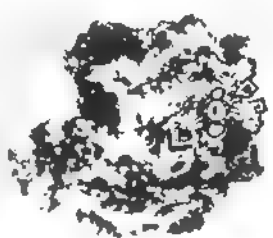
FASCINATING!  
BUT HOW ABOUT  
GIVING ME  
A HAND?



ONE OF THESE  
DAYS, NIKKI,  
YOU'RE GOING  
TO SAY THE  
**RIGHT THING**  
AT THE  
**WRONG TIME**

IF I DO, IT'LL BE  
A TIME I **CHOOSE**  
--AND YOU'LL BE  
THE FIRST TO  
KNOW.

A **WARY, TENSION-FILLED SILENCE**  
DESCENDED AS LOGAN TURNED TO THE  
COMPLEX TASK OF PILOTING A **WORLDLET**  
CONCEIVED WITHOUT HUMAN HANDS IN  
MIND. IT WAS A SILENCE LONG FAMILIAR  
TO NIKKI, THE SILENCE THAT GREW BE-  
TWEEN TWO PEOPLE WHO KNEW EACH  
OTHER TOO WELL... A SILENCE THAT  
DEEPENED WITH ANTICIPATION... UNTIL,  
AFTER MANY HOURS, THE SILENCE  
WAS SHATTERED WITH A BLAST THAT  
WAS LOUDER THAN LOUD WHEN THE  
**WORLDLET EXPLODED** INTO  
MOVEMENT, SQUARELY ON COURSE  
TO DO WHAT NIKKI HAD EXPECTED  
ALL ALONG THEY WOULD DO..





WHAT THEY WOULD DO--  
WHAT THEY HAD TO DO  
TO ENSURE A FUTURE  
FOR EARTH AND ITS  
PEOPLE WAS TO TURN  
THE ENERGIES OF THE  
WORLDLET'S ION-  
PROPULSION SYSTEM...

...INTO A THERMONUCLEAR  
TRIGGER FOR THE MOST  
SPECTACULAR MOLOTOV  
COCKTAIL THEIR HUMAN  
MINDS COULD CONCEIVE...

... A SUPERNOVA!



THE  
CLOUD'S  
TURNING, NIKKI!--  
IT'S TURNING OFF  
COURSE FROM  
THE SUN!

AND I'M  
TURNING OVER THE  
PILOT'S CHAIR NOW  
BECAUSE, GODDAMMIT,  
I'M GOING TO TAKE  
THAT SHOWER!

AND THAT, AS THE LAST OF  
THE SQUAT LITTLE ALIENS  
DRIFTED BACK OUT INTO SPACE,  
WAS THE END OF NIKKI AND  
LOGAN'S ENCOUNTER WITH THE  
MENACE OF KRUSCHENKO'S  
CLOUD. BUT THE TWO MONTH  
RETURN TRIP TO EARTH  
FURNISHED MORE THAN AMPLE  
TIME TO EMBELLISH IT INTO  
SOMETHING JUST A LITTLE...  
WELL. DIFFERENT...

WELL, THOSE DARLING LITTLE  
PEOPLE WERE REALLY MARVEL-  
OUSLY WELL-BUILT. HOW COULD  
WE KNOW THE WOULDN'T HAVE  
ANY STAMINA?

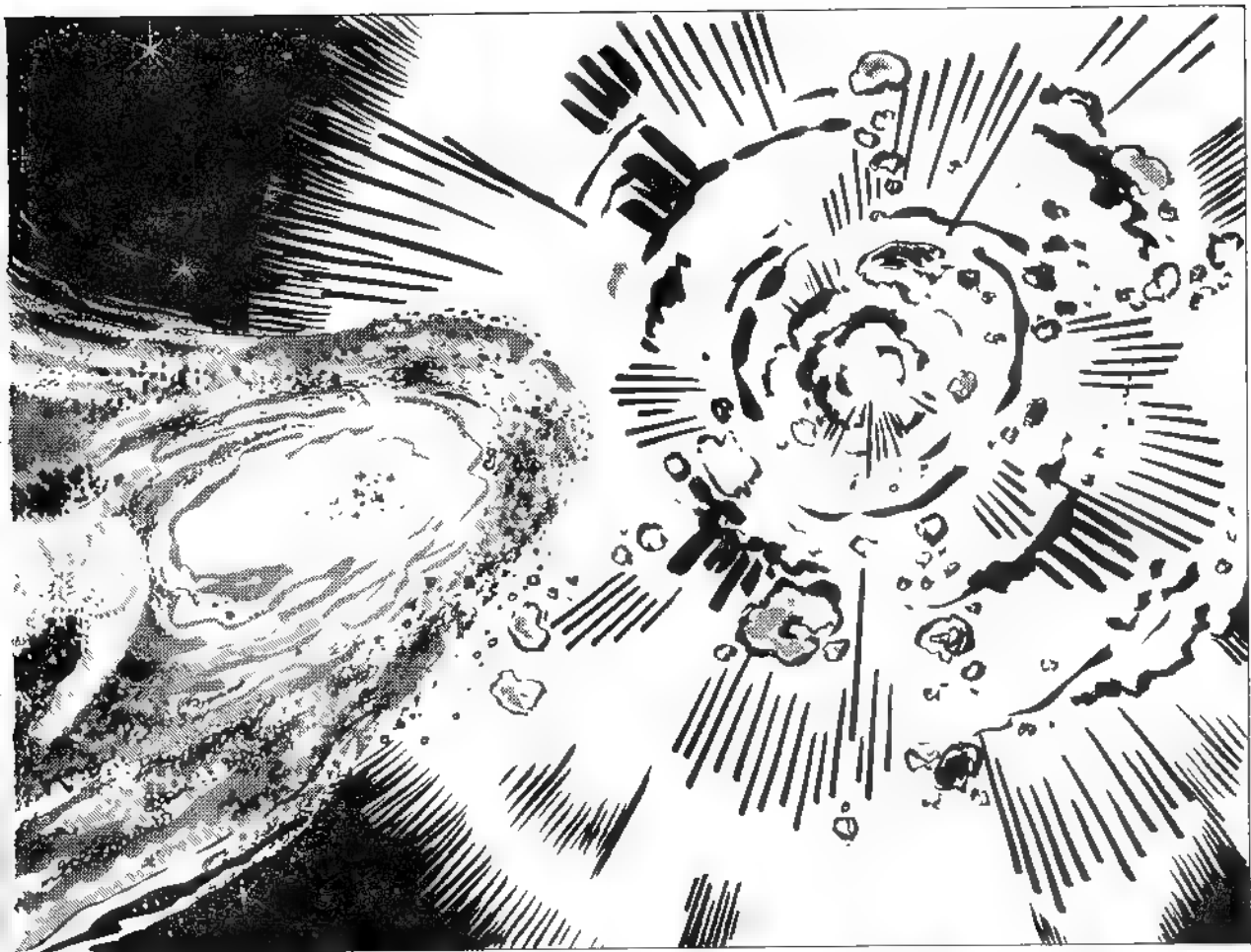


THERE  
WAS  
ONE,  
LAFITTE--  
I MEAN,  
HUNG  
LIKE A  
STALLION!

I DON'T GIVE A SHIT  
WHAT YOU DID WITH  
THEM, BUT WHY DID  
YOU THROW THE  
BODIES AWAY? DO  
YOU HAVE ANY IDEA  
HOW MUCH IT'LL  
COST TO REPRODUCE  
THEM FOR THE LOG?



YOU  
WHAT?



LOSING THE **CAMERAS** WAS BAD ENOUGH. BECAUSE WE'LL HAVE TO STAGE THAT BATTLE IN SPACE AND THE SUPERNOVA...

BUT EARTH-PROBE'S PRIDE IS AUTHENTICITY, LAFITTE.

BESIDES, THE PRESS KNOWS US TOO WELL TO BELIEVE WE WOULDN'T HAVE TRIED IT. WHICH REMINDS ME LOGAN- SHOULD WE TELL THEM ABOUT THE **SHOWER**?

BETTER SKIP IT NIKKI.

BUT THAT **SHOWER** WAS SUCH AN **INCREDIBLE** EXPERIENCE!

WHY DO YOU THINK I WASN'T HORNY ALL THOSE WEEKS? BUT YOU CAN TAKE MY WORD FOR IT NIKKI. - THERE ARE **SOME** THINGS PEOPLE WILL NEVER BELIEVE!

**THE END**

IN A MORE TRANQUIL ERA, HE AND LESSA MIGHT HAVE BEEN MATED, BEEN LOVERS WITH A HOME AND A PURPOSE OF THEIR OWN.



RAWLEY'S FEELINGS FOR HER--AND, WHEN MOOD PERMITTED, HERS FOR HIM AS WELL--



BUT IN THIS STORMY YEAR OF 2207, THESE FEW FLIRTIVE MEETINGS ALLOWED THEM WERE A SOURCE AS MUCH OF PAIN AS OF JOY.



FELLOW CITIZENS---YOUR ATTENTION, PLEASE!

A STORY BY **MAL WARWICK** • ART BY **BOB SMITH** • ART ASSIST. • LETTERING BY **JOHN WORKMAN**







WE WOULD BE INTERESTED IF WE WERE REPORTED THE WIDESPREAD ON FEB 11, 1971 THAT RAUCOUS BAND OF SO CALLED 'DISSENTS'



ONE



THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO  
 1100 S. EAST ASIAN BLVD.  
 CHICAGO, ILL. 60607  
 TEL: 773-936-5000  
 FAX: 773-936-5000



BY THE WAY, I HAVE  
ANOTHER. I  
WANT TO  
TALK WITH  
YOU. I'LL BE  
IN THE OFFICE  
AT 10:00 AM.



AGAIN,  
MAY BE  
THE HORROR  
WAS  
AGAIN!



LESSA, WHAT'S THE PURPOSE OF ALL THIS KILLING? WHY DOESN'T SOMEBODY DO SOMETHING? IF WE ALL GOT TOGETHER WE COULD ..

DON'T WE ALL HATE QUENT TOO MUCH TO WANT TO STOP THEM?



I LOATHE QUENT'S REG' ME AS MUCH AS THEY DO. I'D JOIN A RESISTANCE MOVEMENT IN A MINUTE -- BUT MURDERING THE INNOCENT ACCOMPLISHES NOTHING!

WE'RE STILL ALIVE, DARLING. SN'T THAT ENOUGH?

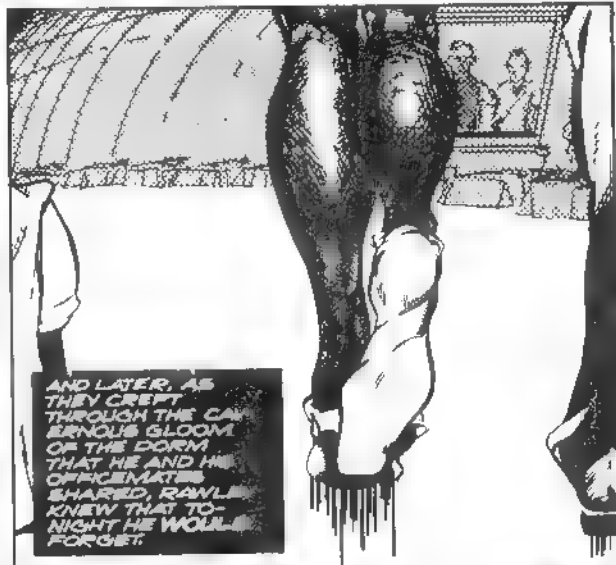


THERE WERE A THOUSAND ANSWERS RAWLE MIGHT HAVE GIVEN, BUT HE LITTERED NONE OF THEM.



HE SAID NOTHING BECAUSE... BECAUSE EVER SO BRIEFLY, LESSA COULD HELP HIM FORGET QUENT, AND THE TERROR, AND ITS GHASTLY DAILY QUOTA OF DEATH.

LET'S GO, LESSA. THIS IS SOMETHING THE COPS ARE ABLE TO DO.



AND LATER, AS THEY CREEPT THROUGH THE CAVERNOUS GLOOM OF THE DORM THAT HE AND HIS OFFICEMATES SHARED, RAWLE KNEW THAT TO-NIGHT HE WOULDN'T FORGET.



AND OUR NEW CHIEF OF SECURITY HAS PERSONALLY ASSURED ME

HEARD THE LATEST LIE, MY LITTLE LOVEB.RDS?

QUENT'S NEW CHIEF THUG WILL DO THE JOB IF HE SURVIVES THE TERROR





IN A SINGLE, TERRIBLE INSTANT, ALL THAT HELD MEANING TO RAWLEY HAD---DIED.



THERE WAS ONLY ONE THING LEFT FOR HIM TO DO--ONE THING, AND ONLY ONE.

I TOLD YOU, RAWLEY---YOU CAN'T FIGHT QWENT WITH THAT ANTIQUE, AND YOU CERTAINLY CAN'T FIGHT THE TERROR.

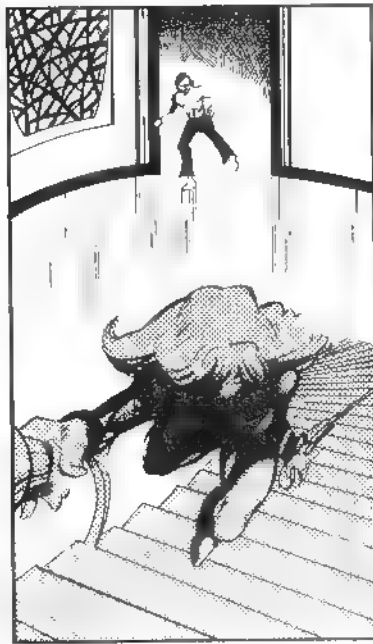
AS HE TORE HIMSELF FROM TOSCA'S GRIP AND RUSHED FROM THE DORM INTO MORNING LIGHT SO SUDDENLY TURNED COLD AND HARSH, HE SAW THE WORLD ABOUT HIM IN DETAIL HE'D NEVER BEFORE PERCEIVED.

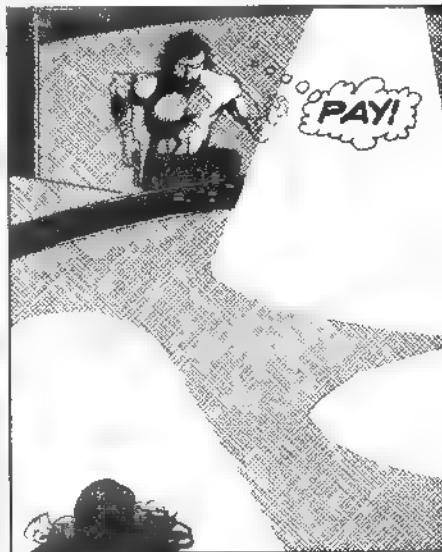


DOWN WITH QWENT



HE SAW IT ALL, AND YET HE SAW NOTHING AT ALL. SAW ONLY THE BLOOD IN HIS EYES.





AND ONE MORE TO FINISH YOU OFF--

# QUENT-FOR ONE AND ALL

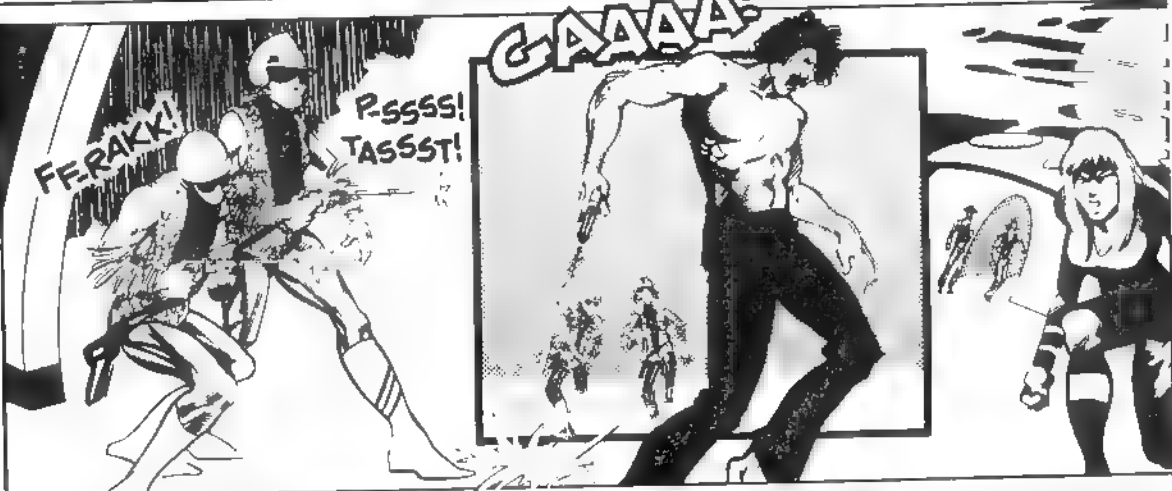
YOU  
FOOL!  
LOOK  
BEHIND  
YOU!

--YOU  
MURDERING  
SWINE!

GAAAAA!

FF-RAKK!

P-SSSS!  
TASSST!



BUT YOU'RE  
THE  
POLIIII....

SO ARE  
WE,  
JERKO!

DAMMIT,  
SARGE,  
HE'S THE  
FOURTH  
ONE UP  
HERE THIS  
MONTH!

DON'T  
WORRY,  
SARA!  
WE GOT IM,  
DIDN'T WE?  
HE'S  
DEAD!

WHEN THEY STOP  
BELIEVING OLD  
MAN QUENT'S  
PROPAGANDA--  
THEN WE CAN  
WORRY.

SARGE, BY THEN  
WE'RE IN TROUBLE!  
A BUNCH LIKE HIM  
GET TOGETHER AND  
FIRST THING YOU  
KNOW-- NO TERROR,  
NO QUENT, NO LAW,  
'N ORDER, NO  
NOTHIN'!



THE END

# LINDA LOVECRAFT



HIGH PRIESTESS of  
SEXUAL FANTASY



MY STORY BEGINS MONTHS AGO WHEN I WAS AN ASSISTANT TO PROF DONALD HORNINGHOPE ON AN EXPEDITION IN THE HILLS NEAR ARKHAM, WHEN HE FOUND...

A STONE WITH STRANGE MARKINGS!

THESE MARKINGS ARE IDENTICAL TO THE ONES IN THE **PNAKOTIC MANUSCRIPTS** USED TO SYMBOLIZE **CTHULHU**!

I THINK WE MIGHT BE VERY NEAR TO OUR FINAL **DESTINATION** OF THE LOST TEMPLE OF **CTHULHU**!



**WHAAZZAT!! THE LOST TEMPLE!**  
GOOD EYES, M'BOY GOOD EYES!  
THAT'S WHY I **BROUGHT** YOU  
ALONG ON THIS VENTURE, LANCE,  
YOUR KEEN SENSE  
OF **OBSERVATION!!**

AW, GEE, PROFESSAH!



I'M HOPING THAT WHAT WE  
DISCOVER HERE WILL BE ABLE  
TO PROVE AN ASSOCIATION BETWEEN  
**CTHULHU** AND THE REST OF THE  
**ELDER GODS**. MY ASSOCIATES  
AT MISKATONIC U. WILL BE  
**GREEN WITH ENVY.**

WHAT'S  
THAT  
OVER  
THERE,  
PROF?



THAT MUST BE THE REMAINS  
OF THE **INNER SANCTUM** OF  
THE TEMPLE! IF THERE ARE  
ANY ARTIFACTS LEFT WE  
SHOULD FIND THEM  
**INSIDE!**

UH... MAYBE  
WE SHOULD  
WAIT FOR

NONSENSE M'BOY, WAIT FOR WHAT? **THIS** IS WHAT WE CAME FOR! DON'T WORRY I'LL BE RIGHT BEHIND YOU LEAD ON!



LIGHT THE LANTERN, LANCE AND LET'S SEE WHAT'S INSIDE HERE!



THAT'S MUCH BETTER' WILL YOU LOOK AT THIS!

ER AH UH... COUGH (GASP!) UH MAYBE YOU'D BETTER LOOK AT THAT, PROF



DON'T LET H M NTIMIDATE YOU LANCE. SHOW THIS BULLY HOW AN EX MARINE FIGHTS COWARDS. FOR FLAG!!! FOR COUNTRY! FOR MISKATONIC U!!!

THE BIGGER THEY ARE THE HARDER TH



PEACE!

GENEVA CONVENTION!

MAKE LOVE NOT WAR!

CHRIST, I HOPE HE'S NOT GAY!





I'M LINDA LOVECRAFT! I HOPE YOU GENTLEMEN ARE RECOVERING NICELY



WHY ARE WE BEING HELD PRISONER HERE? THIS ISN'T TRANSYLVANIA, YOU KNOW! YOU CAN'T USE THESE TACTICS IN ARKAM COUNTY!



TSK! YOU'RE NOT PRISONERS!



MY ASSISTANT, LETCH, BROUGHT YOU HERE IT WAS RATHER HOSPITABLE AFTER ONE OF YOU TRIED TO HIT HIM AND THE OTHER FAINTED AND FELL OVER YOUR LANTERN. LETCH HAD COME TO INVITE YOU TO COFFEE...OR TEA

OR WHATEVER!



IF WE'RE FREE TO GO THEN WE'LL BE GOING



-HMFF- I DIDN'T REALLY FAINT

JUST TRIPPED





BUT BEFORE YOU DO GO, I INSIST YOU MUST HAVE A BITE TO EAT



WELL, I DON'T KNOW

OF COURSE WE WILL, M BOY

IT'S JUST THAT WE ARE A LITTLE CONFUSED, M DEAR, THAT'S ALL.



YOU MEAN ABOUT MY PRESENCE AT THE TEMPLE OF CTHULHU I CAN UNDERSTAND.

AT THIS MOMENT PROFESSOR YOU ARE IN ONE OF THE SUBTERRANEAN CHAMBERS.

I KNOW YOU HAVE MANY QUESTIONS TO ASK, BUT FIRST YOU MUST HEAR MY **REQUEST** OF YOU



I HAVE WAITED MANY LONG AND LONELY NIGHTS FOR SOMEONE AS YOU TWO TO COME BY' AS YOU MIGHT **SUSPECT...**



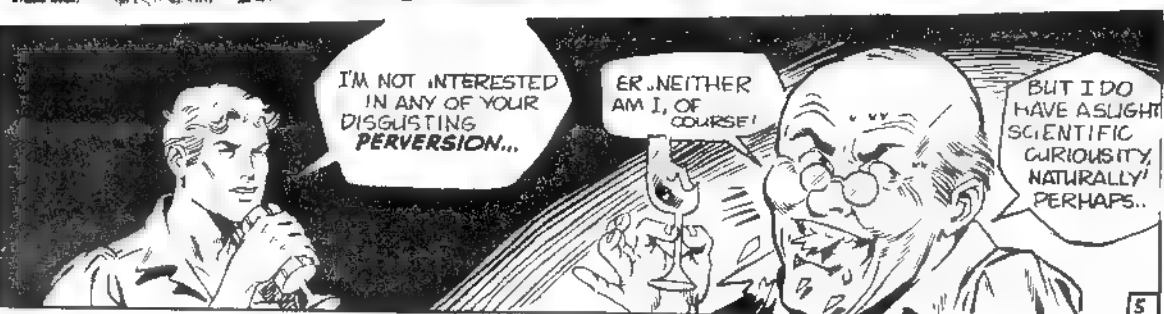
I AM **NOT** AN ORDINARY WOMEN, AND I HAVE **NEED** OF YOU I NEED SOMEONE TO **SATISFY** A **SEXUAL CRAVING.**



TO FILL HIDDEN DESIRES NOT SPOKEN OF IN POLITE COMPANY, TO BRING **ECSTASY** AND **FULFILLMENT** TO ONE SO LONELY



TO SEND **QUIVERS OF PASSION** THROUGH A **BODY** THAT YEARNS FOR THE TOUCH OF **MAN!**



I'M NOT INTERESTED IN ANY OF YOUR DISGUSTING **PERVERSION...**

ER...NEITHER AM I, OF COURSE!

BUT I DO HAVE A SLIGHT SCIENTIFIC CURIOSITY, NATURALLY! PERHAPS..



THE WINE!  
IT'S  
DRUGGED!

I RATHER SUSPECTED THE HANDSOME ONE  
WOULDN'T BE INTERESTED. THEY NEVER  
HAVE ANY IMAGINATION BUT I KNEW THAT  
ONE WHO HAD READ THE NECRINOMICON  
WOULD NEVER PASS UP THE OFFER

TSK! BUT I DOUBT IF HIS HEART  
COULD TAKE THE **EXERCISE**. I  
SUPPOSE WE'LL HAVE TO CHANGE  
**THE BODIES**. BRING THEM TO  
THE ALTAR, LETCH

AUTHENTICATED  
INCANTATION PROVIDED BY  
MR ABDUL AL AZRED, CAIRO  
**UNFORTUNATELY, NO  
TRANSLATION WAS ENCLOSED**





UHHH.. AMAZING WHAT  
A LITTLE SLEEP WILL  
DO FOR THESE OLD  
SKIN AND BONES.

WHERE'S THAT  
GOOD LOOKING  
BROAD THAT  
WAS HERE..?

SO YOU'RE AWAKE  
PROFESSOR  
HOW DO YOU  
LIKE YOUR NEW  
BODY?

WHAT! YOU MEAN? AHA! SOOO,  
YOU LITTLE **VIXEN**, I GET IT  
NOW- OR I SOON **WILL**. WELL,  
WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR,  
**COPPERCURLS**?  
WHICH WAY IS THE  
**BEDROOM**?

BUT  
PROFESSOR!

YOUR LONELY NIGHTS  
ARE ALL **OVER**, PUSSYCAT  
ALL THE **ECSTASY** YOU'VE  
EVER **DESIRED** WILL  
SOON BE ...

OH, BUT  
PROFESSOR,  
**I'M NOT**  
**SEXUALLY**  
**FRUSTRATED!**  
I DON'T NEED  
**SATISFACTION!**



SHE DOES.



GENTLE, NOW!  
SHE'S STILL  
A VIRGIN!!



YOU..YOU! WHAT  
HAVE YOU DONE?  
THE PROFESSOR  
AARRGHH!!

OH DID  
I FORGET  
TO TELL YOU  
THAT YOU'RE  
FREE TO GO

FIRST TRANSOM  
ON THE RIGHT.



(GASP) WELL  
MY GOODNESS!!

I DON'T KNOW HOW I FOUND MY WAY OUT OF THAT  
HELL-HOLE THAT NIGHT. THE NEXT MORNING, ANOTHER  
RESEARCH TEAM FROM MISKATONIC U FOUND ME  
JUST OUTSIDE ARKHAM BABBLING INCOHERENTLY



THEY LOCKED ME IN HERE BECAUSE I KEEP TELLING  
THEM I'M LANCE O'DRAKE - NOT PROFESSOR  
HORNINGHOTE. THEY NEVER FOUND THE PROFESSOR,  
OR MY BODY, OR THAT TEMPLE! BUT YOU! YOU  
DO BELIEVE ME, DON'T YOU! I'M NOT CRAZY! IT'S  
THAT WOMAN, LINDA LOVECRAFT... SHE EXISTS, I  
TELL YOU! YOU HAVE TO FIND HER! SHE IS  
DANGEROUS... SHE IS...



STAY AWAY!  
GET AWAY  
FROM ME!

CALM YOURSELF SIR I'VE  
JUST BROUGHT A SEDATIVE!



BE WITH US  
AGAIN FOR THE  
NEXT TITILLATING  
ADVENTURE OF  
LINDA LOVECRAFT

"WHITE SLAVERS  
from  
OUTER SPACE!"





$$\uparrow H_2 \quad \varepsilon_s \quad 1_d \quad \downarrow \quad \downarrow_d \quad I$$

AWAY FROM THE RADIOACTIVE

ANAL. Calcd for  $C_{10}H_{10}N_2O_2$ : C, 72.06%; H, 4.78%; N, 13.16%. Found: C, 72.0%; H, 4.8%; N, 13.2%.

Wooden  
SHIPS  
on the water

on the water

...Very free and easy

Inspired by the song by Crosby, Stills & Kantner. Story - Friedrich. Art. Le & one

$\frac{M}{\rho} = \frac{r}{\rho}$



«FOOD! DO YOU HAVE FOOD?»

WHAT?

«I NEED FOOD-- FOOD!»

I CAN'T UNDERSTAND YOU STRANGER -- BUT YOU LOOK PRETTY DESPERATE--



--AND A SMILE'S SOMETHING EVERYBODY DOES IN THE SAME LANGUAGE..

HOP ON IN...



HMMM I CAN SEE BY YOUR COAT, MY FRIEND THAT YOU'RE FROM THE OTHER SIDE...



JUST ONE THING! OKAY?

CAN YOU TELL ME PLEASE WHO WON?

OR IS THAT TOO BITTER FOR FIRST GREETINGS?



«UH.. I'M HUNGRY...»

«CAN I HAVE SOME OF YOUR PURPLE BERRIES?»

CHRIST, WHAT'S IT HE WANTS--?



OH... THOSE!



SURE DIG IN - BEEN EATING THEM FOR SIX OR SEVEN WEEKS NOW -

HAVEN'T GOT SICK ONCE!

PROBABLY KEEP US BOTH ALIVE



JESUS, DAVE -- IT'S HORRIBLE ON THE SHORE...

THEY'RE KILLING EACH OTHER-- FOR FOOD!

I CAN ONLY STARE AS ALL THEIR HUMAN FEELING DIES...

A-ALL I CAN DO IS ECHO THEIR ANGUISHED CRIES!

YOU WAR-SCARRED SILVER PEOPLE-- LET US BE--

I-I CAN'T TAKE ANY MORE!

LET US BE FREE--

--AND EASY...

...PLEASE...

SPLASH





Far away we might...  
laugh... again...

Sailing ships  
on the water...

Very free--

--and easy...

Easy, ya know, the way  
it's supposed to be...

Silver people on the shoreline,  
we must be very free--

--and gone...

We are the voices  
of the earth... go  
ride the music...

Yes, go ride the music...





BRUNER